



# The MINUTEMAN

THE MONTHLY RECRUITING NEWSLETTER OF THE TEXAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD • MARCH 2015



**BEST**  
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**BEST**

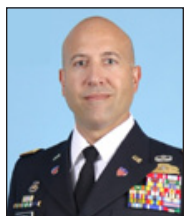
**BEST WARRIOR 2015**  
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**ALSO INSIDE:**



**DALLAS MAVERICKS WRAP-UP • TEXAS CHALLENGE  
ACADEMY INPROCESSING • OFFICER STRENGTH  
MANAGEMENT ROTC UPDATE**





By  
**MAJ AUGUST T.  
MURRAY, Ph.D.**  
Commander, TXARNG  
Recruiting & Retention Bn.

## March - a critical month for REC RET Command

The mid-year point is just around the corner and we need maximum effort by all to hit our mission.

If you are a Recruiter and behind on your mission, here are some things to consider doing this month:

- Attend a formation and speak to the unit you support.
- Ask for referrals from unit members and hand out cards.
- Conduct Stripes for Buddies training for your RSP Warriors. Ask your E1 and E2 Warriors for referrals accordingly.
- Visit your local Texas Workforce Commission office. Participate in TWC Job Fairs, and meet with Veterans.
- Visit the Financial Aid staff of colleges in your area. Educate them on our educational benefits and ask them to Provide your information to Students in financial need.
- Market the ARNG to Future Farmers of America (a partner of ours).
- Work the ETS list of former unit members who may wish To rejoin and receive the prior service bonus incentive.
- Work the IRR list of all branches in your zip codes.
- Work the RLAP list of ETSing Active Army personnel in your AO.
- Have your NCOIC or 2IC go through leads on your box. 1-800-GO-GUARD leads need to be worked immediately, With a sense of urgency. Don't let them stack up.

The above are just a few ideas to be successful. But, success will only happen if the effort is made.

I am looking forward to the results of our March efforts!

Texas Strong! Texas Proud!



*Soldiers from the Recruiting & Retention Bn. tested their skills at Best Warrior 2015. For more, see page 6.*

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## Taking wing at Laredo Air Show

RRNCOs from RGN IV, Team 16 showed off the new Mobile Recruiting Office (MRO) at the George Washington Air Show in Laredo Feb. 15. Thousands of attendees visited the TXARNG booth for pushup contests, rockwall climbing, and more.

# STARTING STRONG



A Texas Challenge Academy Cadet gives a thumbs-up during physical training at the academy's West Texas campus. More than 100 recruits joined the first class of 2015, volunteering to attend a five-month, military-style residency program in the town of Sheffield, more than 300 miles from Austin. Photos by MSG Ken Walker, Joint Counter-Drug Task Force Public Affairs Office.

## Mabry hosts Texas Challenge Academy kickoff

**M**ichael Walls didn't seem to notice the bright and sunny Saturday morning taking shape a few feet behind him.

Instead, the soon-to-be Texas Challenge Academy recruit stared straight ahead, his gaze falling upon the drab blue wall of a gymnasium in the Texas Military Forces headquarters building. Walls, 16, of Quinlan, was joined by dozens of other young men and women, each wearing a starched white shirt, black slacks and a laminated placard hanging around their necks. Despite the presence of more than 100 people in the room, the only audible sound was nervous breathing.

"NEXT!" an insistent voice cried. Walls, gripping a pair of gym bags, shuffled to the TCA instructor at the head of the line. Then, like thousands of

recruits before him over the last decade, he dumped his underwear onto the gym floor.

### ON PROBATION

Originally, Walls didn't plan on spending a brisk January morning at Camp Mabry. The Dallas-area native says he spent the years before his recruitment to TCA hanging out with friends – and getting in trouble with the law.

The Texas Challenge Academy is designed to help at-risk youth get their lives back on course. Through a vigorous military-style physical training and classroom regimen, recruits learn leadership and self-discipline, while eligible cadets



TCA recruits stand for inprocessing at TXMF headquarters Jan. 24 in Austin. After sorting their belongings, the recruits were taken to the TCA campus in Sheffield, where they're currently taking part in a five-month residency program.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE





*A group of Texas Challenge Academy cadets line up outside the TXMF Headquarters Building during in-processing January 20. After saying goodbye to family, the cadets were driven more than 300 miles to the town of Sheffield, where TCA maintains its residency program. Photos by MSG Ken Walker, Texas Counter-Drug Task Force Public Affairs Office.*



*A group of TCA cadets stand in formation at the Academy's Sheffield campus in West Texas.*



*A group of male cadets stand for inspection at the TCA Sheffield Campus. More than 140 cadets left to attend the 5-month program in January.*

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

can earn their high-school diploma.

Wells says he was on probation for smoking-related offenses when his parents volunteered him for the program.

"My mom called my probation officer about going," he said. "I didn't want to go. I never considered the military."

While the program is partially funded by the Department of Defense (with additional funding from the Texas Counter-Drug Task Force), cadets aren't pressured to join the military after graduation. Instead, the program uses military methods to help students end risky behavior and promote hard work.

While Walls says he's unsure if he'll join the military later, he says he has changed his mind on attending the program.

"At first I didn't want to go, I thought I could change my life by myself," he said. "But later, I realized TCA could help me change the way I used to live, it could give me more discipline."

For the first two weeks of the five-month program, new cadets are on probation. Military discipline is strictly enforced, and cadets spend a more-than-usual amount of time learning formations, military drill and ceremonies, and physical training.

During the probation period, cadets

will also receive training on conflict resolution, anger management and other topics. Cadets are evaluated twice-daily by drill instructors to see whether they'll be able to handle the 20-week residency period. On average, about 20 percent of the cadets drop out during the acclimation phase.

## GETTING TO WORK

After completing the acclimation phase, the remaining cadets attend a brief ceremony where they're issued their uniforms and welcomed as full-fledged cadets. Then, the real work begins. Stu-

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**

*Texas Challenge Academy cadet Kennedy Polley smiles after receiving her TCA uniform during a ceremony marking the completion of the academy's two-week acclimation phase. After the initial phase, cadets spend the following 20 weeks learning military discipline, physical training and attending classes. Photo by MSG Ken Walker, Texas Counter-Drug Task Force Public Affairs.*



## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

dents start receiving classroom instruction, allowing them to earn or recover credits toward their high school diploma. Qualified cadets can even enroll in college classes.

Cadet Kennedy Polley, 16 of Dallas, said her mother discovered the academy on-line, and contacted a recruiter on her daughter's behalf.

"When my mom told me I was going, I was like, 'Oh my God!,'" Polley said. "I was screaming and yelling."

Eventually, however, she changed her tune. "I'm looking forward to being able to keep some consistency and get some work done," she said. "But I'll be missing my parents."

Throughout the residency phase, students earn promotions, merits and demerits based on their behavior. Students who maintain good grades and conduct are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities, such as high school band, basketball, football, track and field and driver's education. At the end of the phase, eligible students can earn their high school diploma or GED.

Throughout it all, students are carefully monitored by their instructors, who ensure they maintain military discipline and physical fitness.

Going home

The residency phase is capped off by graduation, which is attended by each cadet's friends and family.

In most cases, the graduation is attended by someone who's instrumental in

the cadet's future success – their mentor.

As part of the TCA's participation requirements, each cadet is assigned an adult mentor. In some cases, the mentor is a family friend, while in others, it's a volunteer who's matched up with a compatible cadet. For a year following graduation, cadets will meet with their mentors weekly.

Both mentors and cadets follow a Post-Residential Action Plan (PRAP), a goal-driven document which identifies what each graduate will pursue for the year following their time at TCA.

Each cadet is required to attend school or maintain employment for the year.

Mentor Jamie Young of Austin volunteered for the program to help a family friend.

"We had been friends with the cadet's family for 20 years," Young said. "The TCA recruiter approached the mother of the cadet, and when my wife found out, she volunteered me to be his mentor."

Young, who left his childhood home at age 16, said he understand the value of an adult mentor.

"I went to trade school with a group of adult students, and they very graciously took me under their wing at age 16," he said. "Each of them was a mentor to me, and really set me up on the path that I've taken."

As a mentor, Young and his cadet will be required to meet with the cadet's case

manager each month to ensure they're meeting the requirements of the TCA program.

## STRONG FINISH

With the program behind them, graduating cadets are better-equipped to face adulthood, TCA officials said. As part of its partnership with the academy, the Texas Army National Guard's Recruiting & Retention Battalion, TXARNG recruiters help academy personnel locate eligible students to attend the program, as well as assist in military training during the residency phase. Though cadets aren't pressured to join the military, recruiters can answer questions and help cadets determine if military life is suitable for them.

At the moment, Walls isn't sure what shape his life will take after he graduates TCA in May. One thing is certain, however.

"My parents think going to TCA is a good idea."

For more information about the Texas Challenge Academy, visit [texaschallengeacademy.com](http://texaschallengeacademy.com).



# BEST OF THE BEST

RR Bn. Soldiers compete  
in Texas Military Forces'  
Best Warrior Competition

Photos by SSG Stephen O'Bar



PV2 Thomas Porath checks out an M-249 SAW during the Best Warrior Challenge



An Air Force competitor negotiates the obstacle course during the Best Warrior Competition.



Marksmen also took aim at targets down-range as part of the competition.





*PV2 Thomas Porath checks in with an official during the Best Warrior Competition.*



*PV2 Thomas Porath climbs over an obstacle during the Best Warrior Competition at Camp Swift, Texas.*



*SGT Tyler Trenkle, Recruiting & Retention Battalion, low-crawls under an obstacle during the Best Warrior Competition.*



# TXARNG/Mavericks team-up nets huge success, leads

In January, the Texas Army National Guard partnered with the Dallas Mavericks and created the High School Team of the Week program. For four weeks, students, faculty, and surrounding North Texas communities were encouraged to visit [TXARNG.com/Mavericks](http://TXARNG.com/Mavericks) and vote for the high school they felt best deserve the title. Designed to reflect the same pattern as March Madness, 16 schools were initially selected to compete against each other. Along with winning the title of "Team of the Week", the four winning school's principal and RRNCO will be recognized at halftime on March 24th during the Mavericks vs. Spurs game.

Unlike other high school programs established with fellow NBA and NFL partners, the TXARNG decided to take this opportunity and host the program on its own website. Combined with weekly posts on Facebook and Twitter by the Dallas Mavericks, as well as face-to-face interactions with on-campus RRNCOs, this method proved to be extremely beneficial for lead generation and site visits. In total,



the site received close to 32,000 visits, 27,000 votes, and generated more than 150 genuine leads. Due to its success, the TXARNG is now working with the Dallas Cowboys and San Antonio Spurs to build a similar partnership next year.

## REGION IV

# Region IV kicks off San Antonio Spurs partnership



*Coach Christina Camacho joins members of the Wagner High School Thunderbirds girls' basketball team for a team photo with their Coach of the Week banner. Camacho was selected as the first Spurs/TXARNG Coach of the Week. Courtesy photo*

Local basketball coaches joined Region IV RRNCOs to kick off the inaugural San Antonio Spurs and Texas Army National Guard Coach of the Week program at the AT&T Center Feb. 4.

The program, which honors coaching staffs at schools across South Texas, also helps local recruiters make inroads at schools with limited recruiter presence.

Each recruiting team in Region IV selected two high schools, where they presented custom-made banners honoring the coach and his or her team.

Later, each coach was honored at a pre-game presentation during a San Antonio Spurs game.

In all, six high school coaches will be honored through the program.

## Military Appreciation Night

RRNCOs from RGN IV, TM 13 pose with an Austin Spurs player during the team's Military Appreciation Night in February. Recruiters exhibited at the game, and are currently planning two additional tabling nights later this season. Courtesy photo





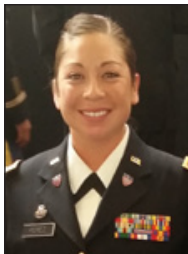
# OSM UPDATE

## Warrant Officers, candidates, welcomed

The following individuals were appointed as Warrant Officers during ceremonies held in January/February 2015:

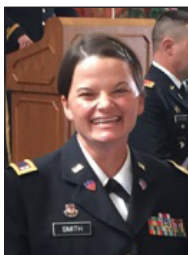
**WO1 Candice Perez**  
Human Resources  
Technician

**Unit:** Headquarters  
Co., 71st TIOG



**WO1 Rhiannon Smith**  
Human Resources  
Technician

**Unit:** 36th SUS Bde.

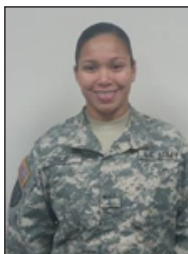


*Officer candidates listen during a presentation at a commissioning ceremony earlier this month. Among the newly-appointed officers were WO1 Rhiannon Smith and WO1 Candice Perez.*

The following individuals were appointed Warrant Officer Candidates during January/February 2015:

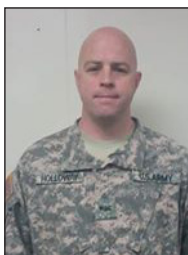
**WOC Terilyn Cruz-Arce**  
Human Intelligence  
Technician

**Unit:** D. Co, 156th BEB



**WOC Luke Holloway**  
Counter-Intelligence  
Technician

**Unit:** Headquarters  
Bn., 36th Infantry Div.



*WO1 Rhiannon Smith's parents pin her new rank during a commissioning ceremony. Smith was one of two new warrant officers appointed in the Texas Army National Guard in February.*





## Keeping Texas Strong

*Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry speak to representatives from Brigade Strength Management during a weekend tabling event at Camp Bullis, San Antonio. Pictured are SFC Robert Davis, SFC Lee Hernandez and SGT Thomas Zamudio. Courtesy photo*

## New Retention NCOs graduate

*Graduates of the February Retention NCO course pose for a group photo following the graduation ceremony at the Texas Army National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion headquarters Feb. 15. The graduates will be charged with helping Soldiers in their units explore re-enlistment and retention bonuses and incentives.*



## New MROs debut

*SFC Maurice Weidler and SFC George Floyd pose with the Recruiting Battalion's new Mobile Recruiting Office. One trailer was delivered to each region, complete with recruiting equipment and materials. The MROs will deploy across the state this year. Courtesy photo*



# NEED *to* KNOW

## Calendar of Events

For the most current calendar, visit [TXARNG.com/calendar](http://TXARNG.com/calendar).

Texas Army National Guard Recruiters are scheduled to man booths at the following events at locations across the state. Community members are invited to stop by to visit with recrecruiters and learn more about serving in the National Guard.

### March 2015

March 4 - Texas State University Mass Communication Job Fair, San Marcos, RGN IV, TM 14

March 4 - Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, Houston, RGN III, TM 11

March 5 - GuardX, Oak Ridge High School, RGN III, TM 9

March 6 - Galveston A&M Job Fair, Galveston, RGN III, TM 11

March 7 - Insane Inflatable 5K, El Paso, RGN I, Tm 3

March 7 - Canyon Lake HS Career Day, Canyon Lake, RGN IV, TM 14

March 8 - Texas State University Teacher Job Fair, San Marcos, RGN IV, TM 14

March 9 - El Paso High School Presentation, El Paso, RGN I, TM 3

March 9 - GuardX at Porter High School, Porter, RGN III, TM 9

March 9 - GuardX at Bryan/College Station High School, Bryan, RGN III, TM 9

March 10 - Summit High School JROTC Ball, Arlington, RGN I, TM 2

March 13 - NGAT Conference, Corpus Christi, RGN IV, TM 16

March 13 - Rattlesnake Round Up, Sweetwater, RGN I, TM 1

March 13 - Canyon Lake Blood Drive, Canyon Lake, RGN IV, TM 14

March 14 - Corpus Christi Youth Symposium, Corpus Christi, RGN IV, TM 16

March 15 - McAllen Tech Job Fair, McAllen, RGN IV, TM 16

March 16 - Canyon High School College Fair, New Braunfels, RGN IV, TM 14

March 17 - 20 - Rednecks w/ Paychecks Spring Break, Muenster, RGN I, TM 4

March 17 - Veterans Expo, Conroe, RGN III, TM 12

March 17 - Arlington Job Fair, Arlington, RGN I, TM 2

March 18 - TXMF Open House, Austin,

## POINTS OF CONTACT

### TXARNG Bde. Strength Management POCs

ARNG, DIV HQ, MED, TIOG	(512) 964-1361
136th MEB	(512) 517-6742
36th CAB (Austin)	(512) 422-6958
36th SUS BDE (Temple)	(254) 424-1039
72nd IBCT (Houston)	(512) 782-3847
71st BFSB (San Antonio)	(210) 787-9127
176th ENG BDE (Dallas)	(972) 804-2602
56th IBCT (Fort Worth)	(817) 343-8946

### TXARNG Recruiting & Retention Bn. POCs

Education & Incentives	(512) 782-6084
AMEDD Recruiting	(512) 782-5269
Officer Strength Management	(512) 782-5491
OCS Recruiting	(512) 782-5882
Warrant Officer Recruiting	(512) 782-5547
Special Forces Recruiting	(903) 701-5207
Marketing	(512) 782-5165

RGN IV, TM 13

March 18 - 19 - Laredo Fun Fest, Laredo, RGN IV, TM 16

March 19 - TXMF @ The Capitol, Austin, RGN IV, TM 13.

## REGION IV



**Austin Marathon:** Representatives from Recruiting & Retention were on hand to man the Austin Marathon's Military Appreciation Tent. Despite the cold weather, hundreds of veterans ran the race, stopping by the tent to receive drinks, snacks and massages. Courtesy photo



# NEED *to* KNOW

## Calendar of Events

Texas Army National Guard Recruiters are scheduled to man booths at the following events at locations across the state. Community members are invited to stop by to visit with recruiters and learn more about serving in the National Guard.

### March 2015

March 19 - Texas A&M International Career Fair, Laredo, RGN IV, TM 16

March 21 - Discover TAMUI, Texas A&M International University, Laredo, RGN IV, TM 16

March 22 - New Braunfels HS Career Fair, New Braunfels, RGN IV, TM 14

March 24 - Mavericks Team of the Week Presentation, Dallas, RGN I-II, TM 2/4/5/6

March 24 - Mansfield ISD Career Fair, Mansfield, RGN I, TM 2

March 25 - Texas Workforce Comm. Dallas Job Fair, Dallas, RGN II, TM 5

March 25 - Beeville Community Job, Beeville, RGN IV, TM 14

March 26 - Recruit Military Career Fair, Houston, RGN III, TM 12

March 26 - Judson HS FAFSA Night, Converse, RGN IV, TM 14

March 28 - Salute to Heroes, San Antonio, RGN IV, TM 14

March 30 - New Braunfels Community Job Fair, New Braunfels, RGN IV, TM 14

### April 2015

April 3 - Choice Career Fair, Arlington, RGN I, TM 2

April 3 - Spurs Coach of the Week Presentation, San Antonio, RGN IV, TM 16

April 4 - 13 Montgomery County Fair,

Conroe, RGN III, TM 12

April 9 - 10 - Burleson Fire/Police Spring Fair, RGN I, TM 2

April 10 - TASC Student Council Conference, Fort Worth, RGN I, TM 4

April 11 - Brownsville Crossfit Competition, Brownsville, RGN IV, TM 16

April 12 - Downtown Hodown, Houston, RGN III, TM 9

April 14 - Pasadena Crawfish Festival, Pasadena, RGN III, TM 10

April 14 - Clear Creek ISD Softball Tourney, Clear Creek, RGN III, TM 11

April 15 - Texas Workforce Commission Career Fair, Fort Worth, RGN I, TM 2

April 24-26 - **Texas Strong Warrior Challenge**, Brownwood

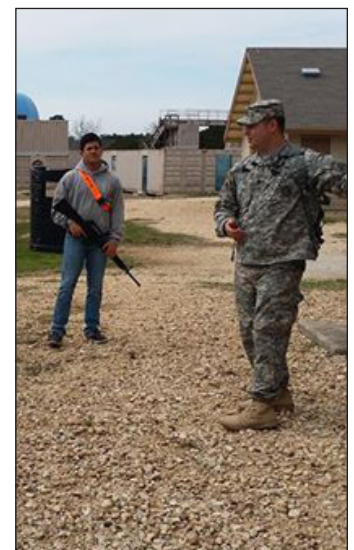
## REGION IV



### RSP Warriors ready for Texas Strong Warrior Challenge

*RSP Warriors and instructors from Weslaco's TM 16 (left) and Austin's TM 14 (right) spent the March 7-8 drill weekend preparing for the Texas Strong Warrior Challenge, set to take place at Camp Bowie April 24-26.*

*At the Challenge, hundreds of RSP Warriors will navigate obstacle courses designed to test their leadership, teamwork and military skills. Courtesy photos*





# 10 TIPS FOR COMPANY COMMANDERS & FIRST SERGEANTS UNIT RETENTION PROGRAM

## 1. MONTHLY EXTENSION

**CEREMONIES:** Recognize and honor re-enlisting Soldiers at least once every month as a scheduled event during drill weekend.

**2. UNIT RETENTION NCOs.** Formally appoint a member of your unit as the URNCO to facilitate your unit retention program IAW NGR 601-1. Send to the 2 day URNCO course at Camp Mabry, REC RET CMD HQs.

**3. RETENTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM:** Your URNCO, Readiness NCO and Recruiter must use RMS to identify eligible Soldiers, track retention and responsibilities.

**4. UTILIZATION OF DA Form 4836:** Provides obligation requirements; and must be processed through RMS to ensure the extension is correctly documented.

**5. RETENTION INTERVIEWS:** Utilize URNCOs, Recruiters and Brigade Strength Managers as Retention subject-matter experts to assist unit leadership in interviews.

**6. EXTENSION INCENTIVES.** Promote and encourage 2 and 6 year extension incentives (bonuses) as well as recognition items such as Extend to Defend kits.

**7. CLIMATE SURVEYS:** Use initially and annually to determine the needs of Soldiers, leadership perceptions, training and other concerns. Address retention issues.

**8. RETENTION IS ISG & CDR BUSINESS:** ISGs and CDRs are the driving force behind a successful unit retention program, it is a required CDR's program.

**9: SPONSORSHIP:** Promote a smooth transition into the unit and make the Soldier's first impression a positive one.

**10: ALTERNATIVES TO SEPARATION:** Work to retain Soldier through other means such as MOS re-class, geographic reassignment, schools, change of duties.

## RECRUITING & RETENTION / BRIGADE STRENGTH MANAGEMENT POCs:

### BRIGADE

BSM SGM  
72nd IBCT  
56th IBCT  
36th CAB  
71st BFSB  
176th EN  
DOMOPS (JTF-71/136 MEB)  
36th SUS  
TRP CMD/JFHQ/R&R/36 ID

### NAME

SGM Ricardo De Souza  
SSG Jimmy Smith  
SFC Francisco Torres  
SFC John Castilleja  
SSG Bryan Calhoun  
SFC Robin Rivera  
SFC James Banks  
SFC Tielow Henson  
SFC Carl Moore

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Commander  
Executive Officer  
Command Sergeant Major

### NAME

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MAJ Jim Carney  
CSM David Castorena

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(512) 782-5404 • james.p.carney.mil@mail.mil  
(512) 782-5163 • david.castorena.mil@mail.mil



# RETENTION INCENTIVES

Eligible Soldiers who extend their service with the Texas Army National Guard will receive outstanding retention incentives:

- **\$4,000 FOR TWO-YEAR EXTENSION**
- **\$12,000 FOR SIX-YEAR EXTENSION**

Must re-enlist/extend for 2 or 6 years. Must be E-7 or below on contract start date not to exceed 13 years time in service at current ETS date.



## EXTEND 2 DEFEND

Soldiers who meet the following criteria will receive EXTEND 2 DEFEND items:

- Current APFT and PHA
- Extend within 365-1 day of ETS
- E-7 or below with less than 13 years in service
- Must be primary slot holder



## RETENTION RECOGNITION BACKPACKS

Starting in January 2015, TXARNG Soldiers who extend their enlistment will receive a COYOTE BROWN OPERATOR'S BACKPACK.

\*While supplies last. Units must request backpacks through their Brigade Strength Manager.

## STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

- Up to \$50,000
- Must re-enlist for 6 years
- Re-enlistment applicants must have less than 13 years time in service
- Re-enlist/extend must be within 365-1 days of current ETS date
- Must be DMOS qualified
- Loans must be disbursed prior to re-enlist/extension date
- All eligible loans must be verified on NSLDS printout